and difficult areas to undertake restoration of degarded eco systems through afforestation, soil conservaton and water resource management techniques. At present there are four Eco-Task Force Battalions raised with the Regular and Territorial Army Personnel, located in the Shivalik Hills (Dehradun), Jaisalmer (Rajasthan), Jammu & Kashmir and Pithoragarh (Uttaranchal).

The substantive Scheme is administered by the Ministry of Defence and reimbursement of the expenditure is made by the Ministry of Environment & Forests.

Environmental clearance to projects

2640. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether overhaul of environment clearance regulations has been done and has been now submitted to PM for final approval;

(b) if so, by what time these new rules are likely to be announced;

(c) to what extent the new rules will help in immediate clearance of projects by both the Center and States; and

(d) whether at present it take longer time in according environmental clearance to the projects?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Under the existing Environment Impact Assessment notification, 1994, 120 days is the prescribed period for granting environmental clearance from date of receipt of application with requisite documents and informaton.

Polavaram Project

2641. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state: